


Implementation of Stunting Health Information Search and Promotion Strategy by Health Workers at the Brayon Health Center

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords: Stunting, Health Information Search, Health Promotion, Healthcare Workers</p>	<p>Stunting remains a significant public health challenge globally, particularly affecting children's growth and development. This study investigates the strategies used by healthcare workers at Brayon health center to search for and promote health information related to stunting, as well as the obstacles they encounter in these efforts. Data were collected through interviews and analyzed qualitatively. Results show that healthcare workers primarily use exploration strategies by searching for information through Google and collect relevant data for dissemination. The main promotion strategy involves social support through multi-sectoral meetings to enhance collaboration. However, several challenges hinder these efforts, including restricted access to scientific articles behind paywalls, a shortage of dedicated health promotion staff, and limited feedback from local stakeholders, especially village leaders. These barriers affect the efficiency and reach of stunting-related health promotion activities. The study concludes that addressing these constraints by improving information access, increasing human resources, and fostering stronger stakeholder engagement is essential to optimize stunting prevention programs at Brayon health center .</p>
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INTRODUCTION

Advances in communication media technology have brought major changes in the provision and access of information around the world. Information can now be accessed quickly through various digital platforms, making it an essential necessity in various aspects of human life (Safitri et al., 2023). In an increasingly complex modern life, information not only serves as an additional knowledge, but also as an important tool in making informed and quick decisions (Herman et al., 2025). As a stimulus that eliminates uncertainty, information helps individuals and groups in managing their daily lives and facing the challenges that continue to grow in this digital era.

At the global level, institutions such as WHO and UNICEF emphasize the importance of reducing stunting rates as one of the top priorities. Indonesia is included in the list of countries with a high prevalence of stunting, so the national government sets targets to reduce stunting rates through various public health programs, including nutrition promotion (Katharina, 2021). This program is supported by the Provincial and Regency/City Health Offices, which are tasked with translating national policies into real action at the local level, especially through the role of Health Center as the spearhead of services.

Health promotion is one of the main focuses to increase public awareness about the importance of healthy living behaviors and disease prevention. The delivery of accurate and relevant information is expected to encourage people to adopt a better lifestyle (Zaenab et al., 2025). However, one of the main challenges is ensuring the right information delivery strategy so that educational messages are truly received and implemented effectively. The use of information and communication technology, especially the internet, is one of the main media to support the dissemination of health information nationally (Waliulu et al., 2024).

The strategy of searching and using information plays an important role so that the information obtained is on target and of quality. Information search is not just about finding data, but is an active process that involves using techniques such as keywords, Boolean logic, and systematic stages to make the results effective and efficient (Hendrawan & Putra, 2022). The use of the right strategy is very necessary, especially in the health sector, because the accuracy and relevance of information greatly affect the quality of services (Susanti et al., 2024). The knowledge of health workers in finding and utilizing valid information is one of the main factors in supporting the success of health promotion programs in the community (Yunarti et al., 2021).

At the local level, the Brayon Health Center, located in West Medan District, Medan City, North Sumatra, is one of the health centers that focuses on dealing with stunting issues through nutrition promotion programs. Stunting is a condition of failing to grow due to chronic malnutrition that has a long-term impact on children's development. Education and counseling about stunting to the community, especially mothers under five, are the main focus in improving the quality of children's health (Pratiwi & Asnuddin, 2023). Nutrition workers at the Brayon Health Center rely heavily on various sources of information, especially the internet, to get the latest data and developments related to handling stunting so that the quality of their services continues to improve.

Based on the results of an initial survey conducted in April 2025 through interviews with the Head of the Brayon Health Center, health promotion officers, and nutrition workers, several important problems were found. The promotional strategy implemented is still one-way and less interactive. The promotional media used such as leaflets, posters, and WhatsApp have not been fully effective in attracting public attention. There is no feedback mechanism or feedback from the public or related stakeholders, so it is difficult to know the extent of the effectiveness of the message conveyed. In addition, cross-sector collaboration, for example with posyandu cadres, community leaders, and village officials, is still not optimal so that the implementation of the program has not run optimally.

Research conducted by Ernawati (2022) confirms that knowledge about stunting is very important for parents, especially mothers. Efforts to improve it can be done through various health promotion media, both print, electronic, and social media. Meanwhile, the study of Manggala et al. (2021) on the success of the Gempur Stunting program in Sumedang highlights the importance of variety of activities, cross-sector collaboration, and program sustainability. However, this study differs from previous research because it not only focuses on promotional media or program success factors, but also identifies the real obstacles that health workers face in finding and disseminating information, as well as the lack of support from local stakeholders.

Although the promotion of stunting information has been routinely carried out through counseling at posyandu and other educational activities, the results of interviews and field observations show that many people do not fully understand the material presented or have not been encouraged to make the expected behavior changes (Sinaga et al., 2025). This emphasizes the need for an in-depth evaluation of the promotional strategies implemented so that the message delivery is more effective and in accordance with the characteristics and needs of the local community. Optimizing promotional strategies is not only important to increase understanding, but also to strengthen the role of the Brayon Health Center as the front line in reducing stunting rates in its region (Alif et al., 2023).

METHODS

This research uses a type of qualitative research with a descriptive approach, which is research that aims to describe existing phenomena in a systematic, factual, and accurate manner (Jailani & Saksitha, 2024). In this qualitative research, the researcher explored the phenomenon of searching for and promoting stunting health information carried out by health workers at the Brayon Health Center. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to deeply understand the processes and strategies used in the field and obtain valid data through observation and direct interviews (Pugu et al., 2024). This research was carried out at the Brayon Health Center, with a implementation time of April 2025. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, which is to select the subjects that are considered the most relevant and able to provide in-depth information according to the focus of the research. The number of informants is adjusted until the data is considered saturated and there is no additional new information (saturation).

For data collection, the researcher used two main techniques, namely semi-structured interviews and direct observation. Semi-structured interviews provide the freedom for informants to answer questions according to their experience without going off topic, so the data obtained is richer and more in-depth. Observations were carried out to see firsthand the search and promotion of stunting information at the Health Center. In addition, the researcher also collected documentation data in the form of archives, reports, and related documents that support the research. In this study, there is no use of special tools or materials physically because the focus of the research is more on collecting qualitative data in the form of information and strategies. However, the instruments used were in the form of interview

guides and observation sheets compiled based on Khultau and WHO theoretical indicators to assess strategies for searching and promoting stunting health information.

Data analysis is carried out interactively and continuously following the Miles and Huberman model, covering three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. Data reduction aims to filter and summarize the data obtained in order to focus on the main aspects of the research. The data that has been reduced is then presented in the form of a narrative description. Finally, conclusions are drawn through continuous verification to ensure the credibility and objectivity of the research results. To maintain the validity of the data, the researcher checked with a triangulation technique, which is comparing data from various sources such as interviews with health workers, direct observation, and documentation. In addition, a check is also carried out by the informant (member check) to ensure that the results of the interpretation are in accordance with the meaning intended by the research subject.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

At this stage, the researcher will explain the results of the research that the researcher obtained while conducting research. The research location is located at the Brayon Health Center, the research time will be carried out in April 2025. The data presented by the researcher is data that has been obtained through data collection through interviews and documentation. These data are the results of interviews between researchers and health workers in the nutrition service section.

Stunting Health Information Search Strategy

Based on the results of interviews and research documentation, the strategy of seeking health information about stunting carried out by health workers follows six stages according to Kuhlthau's theory, namely initiation, selection, exploration, formulation, collection, and presentation (Krisnawati & Kusuma, 2021). At the initiation stage, health workers began to realize the need for information that arose due to work tasks, such as making counseling materials about stunting with the latest and accurate data. This awareness motivates them to seek information, usually through the internet. The most frequently used media are Google, TikTok, and Instagram, due to the ease of access and diversity of information sources available.

After that, at the selection stage, health workers determine the focus of information search by selecting relevant topics such as the number of stunting cases in their area, the main causes of stunting, or how to prevent it. Keyword selection is done simply without using complex search techniques, for example, just typing "stunting in Medan" or "causes of stunting." They haven't made use of advanced search operators such as quotes or AND/OR, so searches are still generic and sometimes yield a lot of non-specific information.

At the exploration stage, health workers begin to search for various sources of information and often experience confusion due to the large amount of data that is not suitable or invalid. They try to find information on official websites such as the Ministry of Health (Kemenkes) website, scientific articles, journals, and even theses that can be accessed online. However, it is not uncommon for them to also ask colleagues or other health workers

to get additional explanations. This stage is the most challenging stage because it has to sort out which information is correct and reliable in the midst of a flood of data.

After getting an initial idea, at the formulation stage, some health workers begin to develop an understanding by selecting the most relevant and valid information. They compared several sources to ensure the accuracy of the data, although some only used the top search results on Google without doing a more in-depth check. This shows that not all health workers apply critical evaluation optimally at this stage. Furthermore, at the collection stage, the selected information is collected and stored in digital format. The storage methods vary, some retype the information on a laptop or computer, and some take screenshots using their phones so that the data can be easily accessed again when needed. This process makes it easier for health workers to organize data and prepare counseling materials in a more structured manner.

The final stage is presentation, where health workers present information that has been collected in the form of presentations, such as PowerPoints, to be used in counseling to the community. At this stage, health workers feel satisfied if the information conveyed can be well received by the audience and helps improve understanding of stunting. However, there are also health workers who feel disappointed if they have difficulty getting complete information because some sources limit access, such as paid journals. From the community's side, the delivery of information by health workers is still considered ineffective. This is due to the lack of auxiliary media used during counseling and less interactive communication methods, so that many people do not really understand stunting. The community hopes that counseling can use more interesting methods and easy-to-understand media so that messages about stunting prevention can be conveyed optimally.

Stunting Health Information Promotion Strategy

The results of this study reveal that the stunting health information promotion strategy implemented by health workers at the Brayon Health Center refers to three main approaches in accordance with WHO guidelines, namely advocacy, social support, and community empowerment (Johan, 2024). In the advocacy aspect, health workers actively conduct socialization by traveling around the village area using an ambulance equipped with loudspeakers to convey information directly to the community. In addition, regular meetings were held with village heads and sub-district officials to obtain support for the village budget for stunting mitigation programs. The social support strategy is implemented through cross-sector coordination involving various parties such as community leaders, sub-district officials, and other related institutions in order to create synergy in the implementation of stunting prevention programs.

Furthermore, community empowerment is focused on strengthening the role of posyandu and posyandu cadres as health information agents who play an active role in educating mothers under five about stunting prevention, including providing nutritious food and monitoring child growth and development. However, from the results of in-depth interviews with the public, it was found that the delivery of stunting health information still experienced obstacles, especially in terms of the frequency of communication that was not routine and the depth of the material delivered. Some respondents stated that they still do

not fully understand the causes and impacts of stunting and its prevention measures so they often seek additional information independently. This shows that although the promotion strategy has been carried out systematically and involves various parties, its effectiveness in increasing public understanding and awareness of stunting still needs to be improved, especially through improving the quality of communication and consistency of information delivery.

Obstacles in the Strategy of Seeking and Promoting Stunting Health Information by Health Workers at the Brayon Health Center Based on the results of interviews with health workers at the Brayon Health Center, several significant obstacles were found that hindered the implementation of the strategy of seeking and promoting stunting health information. First, health workers have difficulty accessing relevant scientific articles or journals because many sources are closed access (paywall). For example, platforms like Scrib and some university digital libraries require users to register, subscribe, or pay in order to have full access to documents. This condition forces health workers to rely on searches on search engines such as Google which provide free access, as well as exchange information informally with colleagues at the Brayon Health Center and with other health centers. Second, there is a shortage of health workers, especially in the health promotion section, so that the burden of stunting promotion activities is handled by a limited number of nutritionists. This causes health workers to feel overwhelmed and less than optimal in carrying out health promotion programs.

Although a request has been submitted to the Health Office for additional personnel in the health promotion section, until now the research has not been fulfilled. Third, obstacles in the form of lack of feedback and participation from stakeholders, especially the village head (Geuchik Gampong), are also obstacles. Several related parties showed a saturation and indifference to the promotional efforts carried out because stunting is a problem that has been around for a long time and is difficult to overcome in a short time. Health workers realize that changes in stunting conditions take a long time, but the lack of active support from stakeholders reduces the effectiveness of collaboration. As an anticipatory step, health workers approach the community directly through the Village Community Conference (MMD) involving community leaders and citizen representatives to discuss and plan steps to overcome stunting together. This shows the importance of synergy and involvement of all parties to optimize stunting prevention and health promotion programs in the region.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been discussed earlier, several important things can be concluded. First, the most dominant stunting health information search strategy is carried out by health workers at the Brayon Health Center through the exploration and information collection stages. In the exploration stage, health workers generally use the Google search engine to find information related to stunting. Furthermore, at the collection stage, the information that has been found is stored as a reference for promotional and educational purposes. Meanwhile, in terms of stunting health information promotion strategies, health workers are more prominent in social support by holding cross-sector joint

meetings to strengthen collaboration and information dissemination. Second, there are a number of obstacles faced in the implementation of the information search and promotion strategy, namely limited access to articles and information sources that are largely closed (paywall), shortage of health workers, especially in the health promotion section, and lack of feedback and support from relevant stakeholders in stunting health promotion cooperation. This condition is a challenge that needs attention so that the stunting promotion and control program can run more optimally at the Brayon Health Center.

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